

RURAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS GROUP

the voice of rural wireless telecommunications providers

1000 Vermont Avenue, NW, 10th Floor
Washington, DC 20005

MEMORANDUM

**To: Magalie Roman Salas, Secretary
Federal Communications Commission**

From: Caressa D. Bennet, Regulatory Counsel

Date: November 8, 1999

Re: Oral *Ex Parte* Presentation - November 5, 1999

**Access to Telecommunications Service, Telecommunications Equipment and
Customer Premises Equipment by Persons with Disabilities; WT Docket No.
96-198**

On November 5, 1999, Edward D. Kania of Bennet & Bennet, PLLC, representing the Rural Telecommunications Group (RTG), participated in a telephone conference call with Ellen Blackeler, of the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC or Commission) Common Carrier Bureau concerning issues relating to the above proceeding. Also participating on the call were RTG members Leaco Rural Telephone Cooperative, represented by John Smith, General Manager; Colorado Valley Telephone Cooperative, represented by Mark Rutherford, Assistant General Manager; Valley Telephone Company, represented by Charles Gowder, General Manager and Central Texas Telephone Cooperative, Inc., represented by Delbert Wilson, Chief Executive Officer.

The representatives of RTG expressed their concerns regarding the potential burden placed on small and rural carriers by the Commission's new rules, contained in the Commission's September 29, 1999 *Report and Order*, regarding access to telecommunications services by persons with disabilities. In particular, the representatives stressed the costs of adapting their telecommunications services to be accessible to persons with multiple types of disabilities, and the low instances of requests for such modifications by persons within their communities.

This memorandum is being submitted electronically pursuant to Sections 1.49(f) and 1.1206(b)(2) of the Commission's rules.